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[For the Advocate.

The Earnest and Faithful Minister.

BY ED. PORTER THOMPSON.

As unto him by Chebar's sacred stream
The angel came, with mandate from on high,
There came to one I know, the Spirit's gleam,
And bade him tell the wicked they should die.
And bade him watch upon the walls and cry
That woe should come to the impenitent;
O, son of man, if thou forbear, on thy
Unshriven soul the curse of blood is sent!
Then rise and warn mine erring people to
repent.

But, doubting in his mind, he listened still,
In company, and musing solitude,
To know if it might be his Father's will,
Or was there come the tempter to delude?
And halting thus, in deep dismay he stood,
Till oft again the Spirit bade him fly,
To quit himself of dying sinners' blood;
And then he felt, "O, woe is me if I
Preach not the gospel, and my fellowman
shall die!"

Ere then the Savior's love had warmed his
heart—
O, joy untold! he knew his sins forgiven;
He loved all human kind, and longed to im-
part
The peace he felt, and lead them up to
heaven;
And earnestness became the hallowed leaven
That made his godly calling all sublime,
And gave him power to look, like holy
Stephen,
Steadfastly up into the heav'nly clime,
And view what glory his, when done with
fleeting time.

The coal from off the altar touched his lips,
And through his soul diffused the fire di-
vine;

Then to the work, as strong man who equips
Himself to run, he bore salvation's sign;
'Twas not his thought that he himself must
shine,
Or e'er be lifted up with human pride,
But to be counted faithful his design,
And sow the gospel seed both far and wide,
And for his Master's flock the heav'nly food
provide.

He gave himself unto the blessed work,
And studied much to shew himself ap-
proved,
As one within whose heart no shame should
lurk,
For teaching ill the truth of him he loved;
And aye, he felt that him it well behooved
To be ensample to the struggling few,
Whom faith, and love, and glorious hope had
moved
To climb the Holy Hill they brought to
view,
And cheering lessons from his walk the halt-
ing drew.

Of Jesus' testimony not ashamed,
He told the godless man his daily sin,
And with his great commission fitly armed,
Appealed to mind, and plead the heart to
win;
And like Hilkiah's son, he paused not in
A temporizing mood with high or low;
Imbued with Nathan's candor he had been,
And to the guilty presence dared to go,
To cry, "Thou art the man!" and all his
danger show.

What though his burning words appeared to
fall
On deadened ears oft times, and callous
hearts?
He faltered not, nor doubted, but in all
He felt the peace a conscience pure im-
parts;
He felt there was no blood upon his skirts;
And trusted God to bless the preached
Word,
And save his hearers from the demon's arts;
And oft his soul with sweetest praise was
stirred—
Anon, in lonely hour this song of love was
heard:

At early morn I walk abroad,
When nature is awaking,
And all things in our Maker's praise
Are with my heart partaking;
The rippling stream, the smiling flower,
The landscape and the world,
The bee, the bird, the leafy bower,
The charming influence of the hour—
A thousand things untold—
All, all, upon my senses move,
I see, I feel, that "God is love."

At cradling eve I wander forth,
When nature is reposing,
She falls to sleep with placid smile,
Her tranquil heart disclosing
The moon and starry host look on,
Like angels watching o'er us;
The very breeze breathe of one
Whose kindly care is never done,
Whose light is e'er before us;
Both morn and eve his goodness prove—
I see, I feel, that "God is love."

If troubles come, my human heart
With gloominess enfolded,
I seek my Father's Holy Word,
Its promises beholding;
I call to mind the former days
When heav'nly peace was mine,
I learn that he who humbly prays
Shall walk in hopeful, happy ways,

With blessings all divine;
I ask, I taste the joy above—
I know, I know, that "God is love!"

I see him down the vista of the years,
When, like the vision seen on Patmos' Isle,
His locks are white as snow; and now he bears
The weight of age with the benignant smile
Of one whose heart a stranger is to guile.
He sees his starry crown laid up in heaven—
His earthly days well o'er, in which, erewhile,
He in his Master's cause has nobly striven,
And to apostate man the holy warning given.

His course is finished; 'tis enough, and now
He lays him down, with tranquil heart, to
die;

With glory's pre-libation on his brow,
He bids his weeping household all draw
nigh,
And speaks a blessing to them from on
high,
Then falls asleep, to wake in Paradise,
'Mid sweet acclaim of thousand souls, who
by

His work of love were led to seek the skies,
And over sin and death triumphantly to rise.

How tells upon the destiny of men
The influence of a single holy one!

His words and ways lead up to heaven, and
when
He sleeps in death, the effects are scarce be-
gun;

"His works do follow him," and as upon
"The mount of God" he stands, his strug-
gles o'er,

'Tis bliss to know what he in Christ has done—
His crown is gemmed with those who went
before,
And those who still will come till time shall
be no more!

Written at Saluda, Ga., Oct., 1863.

It is with the editor a matter of re-
gret that the following letter was so late
in reaching his office. The letter was
written in November—post marked De-
cember 31st—and reached this office Jan-
uary 7th. This statement is made that
the writer, from whom the editor will be
pleased to hear often, may know why the
communication did not sooner appear in
the paper:

MEMPHIS CONFERENCE CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. EDITOR: We had a very in-
teresting and profitable session of Con-
ference at Jackson, Tennessee, commencing
on the 14th and ending on the 20th inst.
The Conference was full, preach-
ers in good condition, more religious than
usual, as they were fresh from fields of
victory and triumph, reporting, for the
year just ending, eight thousand increase.
They appeared, also, to be fully in the
gospel harness, and ready, when the word
of command should be given, to go forth
again to glorious war against the powers
of darkness, the world, the flesh and the
devil.

"There is, unquestionably, something
of moral sublimity and heroism exhibited
in our glorious system of itinerancy.
To see a hundred and fifty men of in-
telligence and moral agency sitting quietly
to receive their appointments to their
several pastoral charges, and then go
forth without flinching, murmur or com-
plaint, is no common sight, and whoever
beholds it must be constrained to say
that these men are influenced by some
spirit far superior to nature or worldly
wisdom. It is no less than the spirit of
Christ. It is apostolic, the only effective
method of spreading scriptural holiness
over all lands.

"In looking over this wonderful sys-
tem, one is led to inquire on what pivot
does this great itinerant wheel turn?
Our enemies have said that it is a spring
of ecclesiastical despotism; but this can-
not be where men are intelligent and free;
especially in a system into which men en-
ter, continue and leave, at their discre-
tion. It is often said among ourselves,
and, if I mistake not, a bishop repeated
it not long ago, that the turning point of
the system is found in the fact that our
preachers voluntarily resign their right of
choosing their places, and the people re-
sign their right to choose their pastors,
and both mutually agree to deposit this
important trust in the hands of the gen-
eral superintendents, who appoint the pas-
tors to their fields of labor according to
their godly judgment. This is a popular
notion, but is it true? I would like to
know if ministers have any such right as
above stated? If so, is it natural, or ac-
quired? If natural, then it belongs to
all men by nature, which is absurd. If
acquired, it must be by becoming Chris-
tians or Methodists; but if it is by be-
coming Christians, does it not belong to
all Christians alike, which is inadmissi-
ble; and should it be said that it is in
consequence of becoming Methodists,
then I would inquire by what law, rule,
or usage? It is certain that no man has
this right before he becomes a minister
and member of the Annual Conference,
and it is equally certain that by the law
of the Church no man has this right
after he enters the Conference; it follows
then that no minister among us resigns
his right to choose his pastoral charge,
because he never had any such right. In
like manner it has been said that the

people have voluntarily resigned their
right to choose their pastors. But who
gave them this right? and when did they
lay it down? Did they have it before
they joined the Church? No. Did
they acquire it afterwards? If so, when,
and where? Plainly, nowhere and at no
time. It follows, then, that the people
do not resign their right to choose their
pastors, because they never had any such
right to resign, and as they have no
right to choose their pastors, they have
no right to representation among them in
the legislative branch of the government
of the Church. On what pivot, then, it
may be asked, does the great machinery
of an itinerant ministry revolve? I
answer, the great commission of the
Divine Head of the Church, "Go ye into
all the world and preach the gospel to
every creature," &c. "Let the dead bury
their dead; but go thou and preach the
kingdom of God." "Pray ye the Lord of
the harvest, that He would send forth
laborers into His harvest." "Go your
ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs
among wolves." "Christ sent me not to
baptize, but to preach the gospel,"
etc. Here is the great platform of itin-
erancy resting upon the divine authority
of Christ to send, and the unconditional
submission of the sent to go, and not a
word, or hint, that they have the right to
choose this or that place as the field of
their operations; on the contrary, at
one time they were forbidden to go among
the Gentiles and Samaritans, and com-
manded to go to the lost sheep of the
house of Israel. At another time they
are commanded to "go into the high ways
and hedges, and compel them to come in,"
etc. Again, Jonah, it would seem,
acted on the principle of choosing his
field of labor in fleeing to Tarshish, but
the Lord had appointed him to go to Nin-
vah; let us not follow his example.

"Thus it was in the beginning, and
so it is now, or should be, in all well-
regulated churches. There should be
competent authority to recognize and send
forth men, called of God into the min-
istry, to their designated fields of labor;
and, when they have succeeded in win-
ning souls for Christ and received them
into the Church, they fall, as a matter of
course, under the pastoral care of their
spiritual fathers, who are to feed them as
the flock of Christ, taking the oversight
thereof; that is, they are to teach and rule
the Church. From all this it appears
plain enough that the notion, however
popular in modern times, of pastors
choosing places, and people choosing pas-
tors, is subsequent to apostolic times and
unsupported by the Scriptures; and as
for the notion of these rights being vol-
untarily resigned by our pastors and peo-
ple, I regard it as a mere hypothesis
without a foundation, as any one will see
who will carefully examine the subject.

"I was glad to meet your worthy co-
adjutor, Rev. P. M. Pinckard. He nobly
withstood the claims of the friends of the
so called great official at Nashville. Our
excellent Book Agent was calm, modest
and dignified in presenting the interests
conferred to his trust; but Dr. M. waxed
eloquent in behalf of the chief organ of
the General Conference, and seemed to
think that it was entitled to patronage
above all the Advocates, because it was
authorized by the General Conference.
But such claims are not likely to do that
paper much good, and it would, perhaps,
be the best way to let the Advocates win
their way to public favor by their indi-
vidual merits.

"We had a pleasant time at Jackson.
The weather was good. There were
crowds of people in attendance, often fill-
ing the Conference room to its utmost
capacity, and the kind friends at Jackson
seemed determined to make us remember
them by their refined Christian hospital-
ity. We shall be glad when the time
comes to go to Jackson again.

"The fall season has been quite favor-
able for gathering and housing the vari-
ous crops in the country, and the work
is now nearly done. Cotton, I suppose,
will not average a half a crop; corn less
than that; wheat scarcely any. There
was but little sowed last fall, and it made
but a poor turn out. When will our
people learn wisdom? When will they
find it to their interest to make bread and
meat at home instead of making cotton to
buy these necessary articles from abroad?"
Nov., 1866. "OBSERVER."

THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST.—The be-
liever lives by Christ, like Christ, and for
Christ. The same principles, pursuits
and motives which Christ had, must be
the exercise of his life. The believer's
life is one which Christ has redeemed,
animated and endowed with spiritual
gifts, in order that it may be spent in his
service. It is not merely for existence,
or character, or privilege, that this life
was imparted, but for action.

PERSEVERANCE.—If you wish to do
good, do good; if you wish to assist peo-
ple, assist people. The only way to learn
to do a thing is to do it; and that im-
plies, before you learn to do right you
will do wrong—you will make blunders,
will have failures; but persevere, and you
will learn your lessons, and many other
lessons by the way.

[For the Advocate.

SERMON.

"Was crucified, dead and buried."—Apos-
TLES' CREED.

Among the vast throngs that followed
our Savior to his crucifixion, there were
many people, especially some pious wo-
men, who could not behold the sad spec-
tacle without weeping. When Jesus ob-
served this, lifting up his face, all bloody
and disfigured, he said to them, "Daugh-
ters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but
weep for yourselves and your children,
for it will not be long before those shall
be accounted happy who shall have no
posterity to inherit the miseries that shall
then come upon this nation." "On us,
and on our children be his blood!" was
the awful imprecation of the mob when
clamoring for the blood of Jesus. How
dreadfully was this prayer answered, and
the miseries predicted by him visited upon
them at the siege of Jerusalem, when the
vengeance of heaven overtook them with
a fury unexampled in the history of the
world; when they were exposed at once
to the horrors of famine, of sedition, of
assassination, and of the swords of the
Romans? They put Jesus to death when
the nation had assembled to celebrate the
passover; and when the nation assembled
for the same purpose, Titus shut them
up within the walls of Jerusalem. The
rejection of the true Messiah was their
crime; and the following of false Mes-
siah was their punishment. They sold
and bought Jesus as a slave; and they
themselves were bought and sold as
slaves. They preferred a robber and a
murderer to Jesus; and their wishes
were abundantly fulfilled, for they met
them at every corner of their streets.
They put Jesus to death lest the Ro-
mans should come and take away their
place and nation; and the Romans did
come and take away both place and na-
tion. They crucified Jesus before the
walls of Jerusalem; and before the walls
of Jerusalem, they themselves were cru-
cified in such numbers that room was
wanting for crosses, and crosses were lack-
ing for bodies!

While the Savior hung upon the cross
in the keenest torments, the chief priests,
rulers and soldiers, and almost every one
passing by, insulted his misery; pre-
suming that a person reduced to that
low condition could never be the prom-
ised Messiah.

But all the reply that he made to their
bitter and reviling speeches, was only by
way of petition to his heavenly Father
"to forgive them, as they knew not what
they did."

A while after he was nailed to the cross
the whole frame of nature began to be
changed. The sun withdrew its light;
the stars appeared, and the eclipse was
the more remarkable, because the moon,
being then at full, could not be in con-
junction. The eclipse began about 12,
and lasted till 3 o'clock in the afternoon;
when all things were full of horror and
amazement. Men's hearts began to relent;
and, instead of their former insults, they
stood in silent expectation of what would
be the issue. All this time our blessed
Lord continued meek and silent, though
languishing and wasting under the ag-
onies which his body endured, and the
heavy load of the divine indignation
against sin.

After he had "bowed his head, and
given up the ghost," there immediately
happened a terrible earthquake, which
rent the vail of the temple from top to
bottom, split the rocks, and opened the
graves and tombs, so that the bodies of
several who were dead arose, and went
into Jerusalem, where they were seen and
known by many. These prodigies, which
attended our Lord's death, struck the
spectators with such amazement that, as
they returned home, they smote upon
their breasts, and, with great lamenta-
tion, declared that the person who had
suffered that day was innocent.

The very centurion and other soldiers
who attended the execution, declared that
he certainly was the Son of God.

After the death of our Savior, Joseph,
born in Arimathea, a man of great
wealth and honor, went to Pilate and

begged him to allow him to take down
the body of Jesus and bury it.

Pilate ordered the body to be given to
Joseph, who, for the time, wrapped it up
in fine linen clothes, which he had pro-
vided for that purpose.

And, at the same time, Nicodemus,
another private disciple of our Lord's,
brought a mixture of myrrh and olives,
with other spices and perfumes, to em-
balm his body, according to the manner
of the Jews.

"And he made his grave with the
wicked, and with the rich in his death."

It seems strange that Joseph, who
never openly professed a regard for Jesus
while living, should now, when he had
suffered all the ignominy of a malefac-
tor, interest himself for his honorable
burial. It is most likely the desire which
Pilate had expressed to save our Lord's
life, and his unwillingness to condemn
him, together with the wonders that had
accompanied the crucifixion, and made so
many hearts relent, was the cause of
Joseph going thus boldly to Pilate. Jo-
seph's haste in this matter, no doubt,
was to prevent the body of our Lord be-
ing cast into the public charnel house ap-
pointed for the reception of the bodies of
malefactors. The riches and honorable
station of Joseph being mentioned, show
how strangely God brought about an an-
cient prophecy concerning the Messiah,
that notwithstanding the infamous man-
ner of his dying, he "should make his
grave with the rich at his death."

As the death and resurrection of our
Lord are the two most important articles
of the Christian faith, great significance
is given to his burial. The grounds im-
mediately around Mount Calvary, and at
its very foot, were occupied as gardens,
one of which belonged to Joseph of Ari-
mathea.

In this garden he had lately hewn out
of a rock a sepulchre for his own proper
interment. Having embalmed the body,
and wound it up in linen clothes, here
they buried it, and with a large stone cut
out of the rock for that purpose, closed
the mouth of the sepulchre.

As the truth of Christianity would de-
pend upon the resurrection of Jesus
Christ, the certainty of his death was all
important. This was put beyond all
doubt, not by the usual manner of break-
ing the legs, but by the thrust into his
side of the spear of the Roman soldier
and the great quantity of blood and wa-
ter which issued therefrom.

[For the Advocate.

"CHURCH.—A place where they hand round
the hat, and be dismissed."—Peter Pike's
New Dictionary.

Many a good thing falls into disrepute
by being abused or overdone. And, per-
haps, Peter Pike has suffered from the
abuse of a very useful practice. The
custom of taking up public collections in
churches is both early and late, reaching
from Peter the Apostle to Peter Pike.
In all temporal matters money is the
means of church success; and for spiri-
tual ends, whether at home or abroad,
domestic or foreign, temporal matters are
necessary.

And to procure these necessary means,
in the manner least expensive, "public
collections in all the congregations"
were adopted. By this means the mass
of people may be addressed in the same
time that is necessary to address one.
But this means of usefulness is often
abused in our churches.

Public collections become so frequent
that some of our congregations are never
dismissed without "handing round the
hat."

Perhaps none are justifiable in absent-
ing themselves from the house of God on
account of these frequent public collec-
tions; but it is true that many do absent
themselves on this account.

It is a necessary custom which is very
easily abused, and ought, therefore, to
be the more carefully guarded. The
habit of taking up collections on every
occasion, and for all kinds of objects,
should be discontinued where now prac-
ticed, and everywhere discountenanced
by the return of empty baskets.

Rev. Mr. Spurgeon's church in London
now numbers 3,500 members.